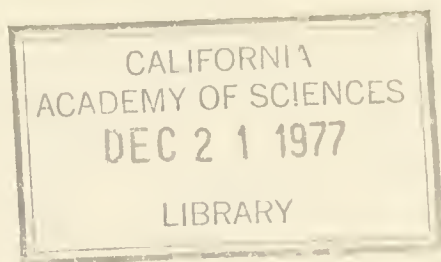


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the gull

Volume 60

Berkeley, Calif.

January 1978

Number 1

Birds in Britain

Our January program will be presented by George Peyton. He will share highlights of last spring's GGAS nature tour of England, Scotland and Wales. Those who missed the trip will want to catch this program. Included in the slide show will be the Razorbill, Redshank, Stonechat and European Avocet.

The group visited the Scilly Isles, Britain's best seabird area. They were fortunate to visit areas not often accessible to the public. In Scotland, they experienced the countryside at the height of the wildflower season.

The program begins at 7:30 p.m., January 19 at the First Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin Street, San Francisco. At 7:00, prior to the general meeting, Mike Wihler, leader of the Iguanas to Incas tour will be available to answer any questions regarding that trip. If you cannot be at the meeting but wish to talk to Mike concerning the tour, call him at 664-6567.

Field Trips Calendar

Wednesday, January 11—Mini trip to U.C. Botanical Gardens for wintering and resident birds. Meet at **10 a.m.** Take Humphrey Go-Bart (free bus) from Center St. and Shattuck Ave. in downtown Berkeley on the half hour or drive up Hearst Ave., turn right on Gayley Rd., left on Rimway Rd., left on Centennial Dr. to the gardens. Leader, Ruth Voss (525-8032).

Saturday, January 14—Golden Gate Park. Meet at **9:30 a.m.** at

43rd Ave. and Fulton at the north Chain of Lakes. The walk is around the lakes in that vicinity and later around Lake Merced. Bring lunch. Leader, Betty Short (921-3020 work).

Saturday, January 21—Dillon Beach. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Bank of America building on Hwy. 1 in the town of Tomales to caravan seven miles to Lawson's Landing. Entrance fee of \$1.50 - \$2 per car. We expect to see three different kinds of loons, red-necked grebes, brant and shorebirds. Bring lunch and warm clothing. Leader, Mary Louise Rosegay (386-1640). (✓)

Sunday, January 22—Abbotts Lagoon and vicinity, Pt. Reyes National Seashore. About a five mile walk around the lagoon to look for wintering waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors and landbirds of the grass and marshes. Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot behind the Inverness Store on Sir Francis Drake Hwy. in the town of Inverness. There is not much parking area at the trailhead so it will be necessary to carpool. Bring lunch and boots. Leader, Nick Story (527-0210). (✓)

Wednesday, January 25—Mini trip to Richardson Bay Wildlife Sanctuary for ducks and shorebirds. After the walk, the restored Victorian Lyford House which is part of the sanctuary will be open for a brief tour. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the sanctuary, 376 Greenwood Beach Rd., Tiburon. From San Francisco, take U.S. 101 north to the Belvedere-Tiburon exit, go east and turn right at the third traffic light. Golden Gate Transite riders de-bus at Cecilia Way. Leader, Sanctuary naturalist Information, Hap Fraser (661-8891).

Sunday, January 29—Grizzly and Joice Island Wildlife Area for waterfowl, shorebirds, hawks and marshbirds. From Interstate 80 at Fairfield, take West Texas St. to Fairfield City Park (about one-quarter mile south of freeway on your right). Meet at the parking lot at 8:30 a.m. Allow ample driving time if it is foggy. Bring lunch. Leader, Peter Allen (548-4592). (✓)

Carpooling: The trips marked (✓) are those for which carpooling will be arranged. If you need a ride or can offer one, call Kate Partridge at 849-1951 (home) or 642-5784 (work: 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.) Remember that even a last minute offer of a ride can allow someone else a chance to participate. It should be understood that transportation expenses are to be shared by passenders—this includes bridge tolls, parking, entrance fees and milcage.

A reminder: persons planning to lead out-of-state trips *must* have them cleared by the Field Trips Committee and the GGAS Board of Directors before they can be considered valid GGAS-sponsored events.

Late October and November Observations

THE WESTERN FRONTIER

The seacoast is the most exceptional feature of our area, and once again a goodly portion of the period's sightings were concentrated on that frontier and the ocean beyond. A pelagic trip in Monterey Bay 30 Oct. found one Flesh-footed Shearwater and two Short-tailed Shearwaters (RS)—the former on the trailing edge of fall migration, the latter the vanguard of a small wintering population. A Manx Shearwater was scoped from Monterey 6 Nov. (VR), but 106 passing Pigeon Point 12 Nov. (BS) and 112 past Point Pinos in two hours 13 Nov. (VR, JM) was unprecedented in our area. Whatever the origin of that movement, strong north-westerlies were certainly responsible for a Leach's Storm-Petrel (almost never seen from shore) off Monterey's Coast Guard jetty 6 Nov. (VR, JM, LH), an Ashy Storm-Petrel picked up in the Alameda estuary 10 Nov. (*fide* DH), and an influx of Red Phalaropes to coastal lagoons 17–19 Nov. (FP, BRt, JM). Also uncommon onshore were Sabine's Gulls at Robert's Lake, Seaside 24–30 Oct. (DdR) and in Monterey Harbor 6–11 Nov. (JM, CC). The two Franklin's Gulls and Black Tern remained at the mouth of the Salinas River through 29 Oct., and a late Arctic Tern was there 6 Nov. (JM). Other Franklin's Gulls were found at Lake Merced, San Francisco, 15–16 Nov. (FN, GJ, GW, BF) and in the Sacramento Delta near Knightsen, Contra Costa County, 6 Nov. (SM).

Pastures in Castroville 30 Oct. (VR) and Golden Gate Park 25 Nov. (SW) attracted Cattle Egrets. Bodega Bay is a regular stopping point for Brant and on 22 Nov. it held one of the white-bellied form, recently considered a separate species (BF). The return of a Rock Sandpiper to Bodega Head 13 Nov. (BF) is expected, but a Mountain Plover on Point Reyes 13 Nov. (RH) is truly surprising. Even more glamorous was a **Ruff** at Ano Nuevo 27 Oct.–2 Nov. (PR, RM, TBr, TD).

GENESIS

Winter arrives during this period. Large flocks of geese descend on the Central Valley—the Los Banos white geese contained a "Blue" Goose 19 Nov. (DR). European Widgeon settle in in small numbers; the San Francisco Zoo bird (yes, it's wild) arrived 30 Oct. (DM). For the second year, Lake Merritt, Oakland, sports Tufted Ducks, probably to winter again. A male arrived 27 Oct. and another male joined it the next day (HC). Occasionally we get "Harlan's" Hawks in the Central Valley, but one of the little-known light phase was identified at Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge 19 Nov. (DDeS, SL) and is doubly rare.

Tropical Kingbirds head north from western Mexico in the fall and arrive here in October and November. Some stay to winter, as the Lake

Merced bird is apparently doing for the second year. It was joined by another 20 Nov. (BP). Whether others at Ano Nuevo 29–30 Oct. (DP) and Bodega Bay late Oct.–1 Nov. (JM) will successfully survive the winter near here or further north is speculative. Appearing even later is the occasional **Eastern Phoebe**. One at Bolinas 15 Nov. (RS) fits well within this pattern.

Another returnee was a **Sharp-tailed Sparrow** at Pine Gulch at the north end of the Bolinas Lagoon 14–23 Nov. (PRBO, RS, *et al*); a minute number apparently winter in salt marshes on the coast of California. By now it is clear that Swamp Sparrows regularly winter in our area and are not vagrants. Reports of this secretive species included three in Olema Marsh 18 Nov. (JM), two at Bolinas Lagoon 13–18 Nov. (RS), and singles at the mouth of the Carmel River 30 Oct.–4 Nov. (EM, JL), Golden Gate Park 25–26 Oct. (LCB, PM), and Inverness 19 Nov. (BR).

EXODUS

The last real vagrant wave of the fall occurred 27 Oct.–3 Nov., comprised mostly of Palm Warblers; a total of twelve from Monterey to Bodega Bay, with an additional nine straggling into the next two weeks. Black-and-white Warblers were at Bodega Bay 12 Nov. (PG) and Bolinas 13 Nov. (RS) and the last Blackpoll was recorded on Point Pinos 27 Oct. Much rarer were **Canada Warblers** in Pacific Grove 25 Oct. (MN) and at Nunes Ranch, Point Reyes, 29 Oct. (EG, EM *et al*). A dead Bay-breasted Warbler was picked up in Sacramento 3 Nov. (RS) and constitutes the first inland record for Northern California.

An interesting situation developed at the Carmel River. Birds arriving in mid-October found the habitat so friendly that they lingered through mid-November and some may even attempt to winter. Included in this event were two Black-and-White Warblers 16 Oct. – 13 Nov., two Tennessee Warblers 16 Oct. – 13 Nov., a **Philadelphia Vireo** 23 – 30 Oct. (RS), and a **Black-throated Green Warbler** 16 Oct. – 13 Nov. (JL, VR, JM, EM, LH). A late Bay-breasted Warbler was identified 6 Nov. (VR, JM, EM, LH) and four Palm Warblers were present 13 Nov. (EM). But the finest prize was a **Yellow-throated Warbler** present 27 – 29 Oct. (TBI, DP, RS, DbR *et al*).

During the period the Carmel River also had such late-lingering westerners as Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and Nashville and Wilson's Warblers, all of which have wintered in that area before. More exciting late westerners were an Ash-throated Flycatcher at Princeton 29 Oct. (JM) and a Swainson's Thrush in Golden Gate Park 5 Nov. (JM). The latter bird is the latest record for Northern California, beating the previous bird taken at Santa Cruz 4 Nov. 1940 by one day. A Saw-whet Owl,

rarely encountered in migration, was found on its day roost among dogwood in Tilden Park 27 Oct. (HJ).

Belatedly received was a report of California's eighth state **Common Grackle**, observed in Hayward on 13 Oct. (SM).

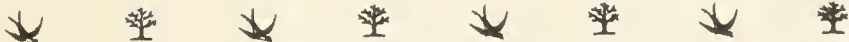
THE NORTHERN INVADERS

This has proved to be the best year in the history of California birding, at least if one counts up the number of species found. What better way to close it than with an impressive invasion of more northerly species. The northeast is inundated with Northern Shrikes, which are pushing further south than usual, and our area has received singles at Gray Lodge 12 Nov. (BMCC) and Grizzly Island 15 Nov. (TBr). Flocks of Evening Grosbeaks irregularly appeared, with twenty in inland Marin County 3 Nov. (WMP) and up to seven at the Carmel River 30 Oct.—13 Nov. (EM). Rough-legged Hawks invaded the region, and the forces that bring them can also deliver Snowy Owls. One Snowy Owl has been found on Humboldt Bay already and Emperor Geese have visited the northcast. Both species should be looked for in our area this winter. A Snow Bunting was flushed from a Point Reyes beach parking lot 17 Nov. (A&WG), but a "stake-out" Snow Bunting presided over a mostly unlikely spot—the base of Monticello Dam (Lake Berryessa) in oak woodlands 19–27 Nov. (DW, RS, and a huge mob). Truly incredible.

Observers:

Laurence C. Binford, Tony Bledsoe (TBl), Tony Briggs (TBr), Chris Carpenter, Herold Connon, Tom Davis, Dave DeSante, Bud Fry, Al and Wilma Ghiorso, Phil Gordon, Ed Greaves, Hans Johanson, Gene Jones, Linda Hale, Rick Hewitt, Dick Hoffman, John Luther, Susanne Luther, Eugene Makishima, Robert Mauler, Brian McCaffery, Peter Metropoulos, Scott Moorhouse, Joe Morlan, Dan Murphy, Fran Nelson, Margot Nelson, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, William M. Pursell, Dennis Parker, Florence Plymell, Bill Porteous, Van Remsen, Bob Richmond (BR), Patricia Rihter, Don Roberson (DR), Debi Robinson (DbR), Bill Root (BRt), Barry Sauppe, Rich Stallcup, Gil West, Susan West, Dave Winkler, Keiko Yamane.

—DON ROBERSON, *Observations Editor*
2244 Encinal #5, Alameda, Ca 94501 (865-2462)



Conservation Notes

Emeryville Crescent Update

At a meeting on November 17, the GGAS Board of Directors unanimously passed a resolution stating its opposition to the intrusion into the fragile wildlife area of the Emeryville Crescent of a hiking and bicycle riding trail planned by the East Bay Regional Park District. The section we opposed would be only a small portion of the total envisioned trail which is planned by EBRPD to run from Point Isabel in Albany to Jack London Square in Oakland.

The resolution urged that the trail leave the shoreline at Powell Street in Emeryville, sparing the salt water marsh and its unique habitat, and run along the east side of Freeway 80. The trail could then rejoin the shoreline via a spur along the south side of the Oakland-San Francisco Bay Bridge which would culminate at a Cal Trans fill area where it was recommended that picnic, recreation and educational facilities be provided.

GGAS members who agree with this position are asked to write to John J. Leavitt, President of the Board of Directors, EBRPD, 11500 Skyline Boulevard, Oakland, CA 94619.

Wildlife News, Good and Bad

The Sierra Club's Northern California Wildlife Committee points out that Governor Brown's veto of Senate Bill 414, the antelope depredation measure, gave wildlife a victory across the board with the defeat of all anti-wildlife bills in 1977. Although California's antelope population has risen to an estimated 4,900, the Governor felt the bill did not require adequate evidence of damage by antelope nor safeguard the control permits from possible abuse.

The moratorium on hunting mountain lions was extended another five years by sizable majorities in both the State Senate and Assembly.

Recently, the Tule Elk in Owens Valley had multiplied to a point where some reduction of the herd was mandatory. Shooting of a prescribed number of the population was proposed, which evoked a chorus of protest from elk-lovers. New homes were soon found for a portion of the surplus elk, and if the National Park Service can find \$60,000 for 2.4 miles of fencing to confine a small herd to 2,600 acres, some of them will be brought to the Point Reyes National Seashore.

Suisun Marsh, which annually plays host to twenty percent of all Pacific Flyway ducks, received considerable attention from California legislators as several bills were introduced to guarantee its preservation

despite a Peripheral Canal or other disruptions of Delta water flows. Finally, Assemblyman Victor Fazio's Suisun Marsh Protection Act (AB17-17) was passed just before adjournment. This gives the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) control over wet portions of the marsh.

However, our once common, though furtive bobcat is suddenly in serious trouble. With the import ban on the larger spotted and striped cat pelts, attention has turned to this little feline. It's reported that trappers are getting over \$100 per pelt. A temporary ban on the exportation of bobcat pelts was imposed by the Endangered Species Authority of the Department of the Interior. But there is mounting pressure from the fur industry to remove it. Expressions of opinion on this matter may be sent to Dr. William Y. Brown, Executive Secretary of this authority at the Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

—PAUL COVEL

Conservation Bills Pending

At this writing, Congress has not yet acted on a number of important conservation bills. The Alaska bills supported by the Alaska Coalition, H.R. 39 and S. 1500, have stalled and will not be voted on until sometime in 1978. The bills must be passed by December, 1978 or the land considered by these bills will be unprotected.

The bills to expand Sequoia National Park to include the Mineral King area, S. 88 and H.R. 1771, are still in committee. If the Mineral King area is developed, it would increase traffic, encourage development in surrounding areas and reduce the quality of the environment in the area.

The bills to expand Redwood National Park by 48,000 acres, H.R. 3813 and S. 1976, are still being deliberated. In the meantime, the redwoods in the proposed addition continue to be logged. If Congress is to save the old-growth redwoods in the proposed addition, they must act quickly.

You are urged to write your Congresspersons on these matters, especially on Alaska. If you have written before, please write again. Every letter counts.

—CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Birding Classes:

Piedmont

Susanne Luther will teach two classes through the Piedmont Adult School. "Birding in Northern California" is geared to study the many

habitats of the north part of the state. There will be evening slide presentations in preparation for each of the three weekend trips planned—Monterey in January, Los Banos in February and Honey Lake in March. Class time is 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday evenings, January 10 through March 14.

“Weekday Birding in the Bay Area” will explore many beautiful areas nearby, viewing the wealth of wintering shorebirds and waterfowl, as well as landbirds during the ten week course. Class time is 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon on Thursday mornings. Appropriate for beginners and intermediate birders.

For more information, call Piedmont Adult School at 653-9454.

San Francisco

Joe Morlan's popular birding classes will be offered again at no cost through the Galileo - Marina Community College Center. A class designed primarily for beginners will start Wednesday, January 25 at 7:00 p.m. in room 254 at the Marina Junior High School at the corner of Fillmore and Bay Streets. It will stress recognition of the major families of wild birds, their habitats, and the common birds found within the city.

An Intermediate class will start Thursday, January 26 at 7:00 p.m. in room 253 at the Marina Junior High School. With the use of illustrative slides and self-testing quizzes, the class proceeds in a systematic way through the field guide from Loons to Alcids.

An advanced class designed primarily for those who have already taken the intermediate class will begin on Tuesday, January 24 at 7:00 p.m. in room 254 of the Marina Junior High School. It continues with the land birds from Doves through Sparrows.

Field trips will be arranged on weekends, twice a month for each class. All classes meet weekly from 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. There is ample free parking at the lot adjacent to the school which has its entrance on Bay Street.

For further information, call the school at 885-0660.

Alameda

Don Roberson, *Gull* observations editor, will conduct a class in Field Ornithology through the Alameda Adult School, beginning January 4 and running for eleven weeks. The class will meet for three hours each Wednesday evening. Featured are several Saturday field trips, including the GGAS-sponsored pelagic trip out of Monterey Harbor on February 5. (Persons interested in participating in this trip should send their \$15

reservaton checks to the GGAS office, 2718 Telegraph Ave., #206, Berkeley, CA. 94705 immediately.) Although aimed at the intermediate student, beginners are welcome. Field identification and California habitats are stressed. A \$5 tuition fee allows one to take as many classes as desired at the Alameda Adult School. For further information, call the school at 522-6710.

Birds, Belugas and Bears

A GGAS-sponsored trip to the Hudson Bay region around the town of Churchill (Manitoba) is in the works for July 17-23, 1978. Tour leader Clarence Smith notes that in this area where tundra and boreal forest meet, the short arctic summer condenses the growing cycle into an incredible floral and faunal experience. Birding should be choice: Rock Ptarmigan, Northern Three-toed Woodpecker, Golden Plover, Hudsonian Godwit, Hawk Owls, Yellow Rails and Great Black-backed Gulls are among species likely to be seen. Nearly thirty species of shorebirds have been recorded around Churchill. Experienced local birders will act as guides. Photography possibilities are tantalizing.

The gleaming white Beluga whale enters the Churchill River at close range at this time, and Polar Bear sometime wander through the town. Visits are planned to two abandoned villages—one Eskimo, one Indian—as well as to Fort Prince of Wales. In Winnipeg one may visit the Living Prairie Museum and the Museum of Man and Art.

Cost of the trip will be under \$900, including airfare, accomodations, group leader, excursions and meals. (A portion of the cost will go to GGAS and is tax deductible.) The first fifteen people to send in deposits will be assured places.

For further information, contact Forum Travel International, 2437 Durant Ave., #208, Berkeley, CA 94704, (415) 843-8294.

January Meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Society

The Northern California Chapter of the Cooper Ornithological Society will meet Thursday, January 5 at 8:00 p.m. in the Life Sciences Building, Room 2503, University of California, Berkeley. The speaker will be Dr. Donald Dahlsten who has been studying Mountain Chickadees in the Sierra Nevada for the past ten years in relation to insect control problems. His talk is entitled, "The development of control strategies for forest insects." Dr. Dahlsten is Professor of Entomology, Division of Biological Control, at the University of California, Berkeley.

Sunday Seminars at Whittell Center

Jon Winter, instructor of ornithology with more than twenty-five years of field experience, and regional co-editor of *American Birds*, will present six seminars on selected identification problems for those birders who are ready to move beyond the field guide.

The workshops, covering such subjects as fall warblers, gulls, flycatchers, petrels and shearwaters, will be presented as illustrated lectures at National Audubon Society's Whittell Educational Center in Tiburon. The lectures are scheduled for 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Sundays, January 8 and 22, February 5 and 12, and March 5 and 12.

Registration for the entire series of six seminars is \$30, but you may register for individual lectures at \$6.50 per session. For full information and registration forms send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the center at 376 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon, CA 94920.

PRBO Natural Excursions

The Point Reyes Bird Observatory has announced some of its excursions planned for 1978. "Birds of Tikal, Guatemala," February 1 - 7 will be a week spent exploring the archeological and wildlife reserve of Tikal. Mayan ruins and refreshingly tame wildlife are features of this trip. "Winter Wildfowl of California," February 3 - 5 will cover an area from Honey Lake in the desert to Gray Lodge Refuge in the central valley. "Birds of Costa Rica," March 6 - 19 is a two week excursion to three famous birding areas; the cloud forest of Monte Verde, the middle elevations at Las Cruces and the lowlands of Palo Verde, regions where the magnificent Quetzal, White-faced Monkey and the anteater are found. "Birds of the California Desert," March 20 - 23 will be a car camping trip to observe migrant and resident desert birds as well as reptiles and other wildlife in the Mojave and Sonoran deserts from Yuma, Arizona to the San Bernardino Mountains.

For full information about these and other trips, write to PRBO, 4990 Shoreline Highway, Stinson Beach, CA 94970.

Nominations for GGAS Board Sought

The Nominations Committee, consisting of David Littlejohn, Joe Morlan, Dr. Gertrude Machlis and Kris Olsen, is accepting nominations for the GGAS Board of Directors. The positions to be filled are President, Vice President, East Bay Director and West Bay Director. Nominations can be phoned or mailed to the office, 2718 Telegraph Ave., #206, Berkeley, CA 94705, 843-2222. The deadline for nominations is the first of February.

Gifts and Bequests

FOR AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

In memory of:
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Van Ysen Johnson, Elizabeth Jordan, Roberta Long
Jean C. Pubil Barbara and Brad Goodhart

Gift of:

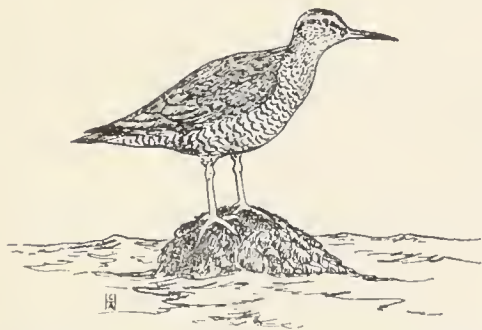
FOR GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY

In memory of:
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FOR THE ELSIE ROEMER FUND

In honor of Elsie Roemer's birthday Gertrude Bialos, Becky and
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berger, Golden Gate Audubon Society, Ralph and Margaret
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Memorial and honorary gifts and bequests will be used as specified by the donors. Acknowledgement will be made in *The Gull* and personally by the Corresponding Secretary, Gail Overstreet. Please send checks made out to the Golden Gate Audubon Society to: Corresponding Secretary, GGAS, 2718 Telegraph Avenue #206, Berkeley, CA 94705. All gifts are tax deductible. We also bring to your attention that in order for donations to Audubon Canyon Ranch to be acknowledged in *The Gull* all checks must be made out to GGAS.



A reminder: All copy for *The Gull* is due on the first of the month for the following month's issue. Cooperation with this deadline is imperative so that each issue can be published and mailed on schedule.

A complaint: People continue to complain about late delivery of the newsletter (my November issue arrived nearly six weeks after it was mailed!) I urge every subscriber with this problem to register a complaint to the postal service by letter or by filling out the form available at any local branch of the post office.

NANCY CONZETT, *Editor*



Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc.
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THE GULL

January 1978

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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RARE BIRD ALERT (recorded) 843-2211

Rare Bird Alert compiler, Joe Morlan (654-1358)

Observations for THE GULL, Don Roberson (865-2462)

Executive Director, Vera Paraschak (843-2222)

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Mail for all individuals listed above should be sent to the GGAS office.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post Office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: third Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$15 per year (individual); \$18 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$3 per year; single issues 30¢. High school and college student membership \$8.50 per year. Senior citizen individual, \$12.00; senior citizen family, \$15.00.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

***The Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.**